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a mark of its antiquity, one may express surprise that the earlier scribes did not go further and emend the text which they conceived to be faulty. Certainly its position—in the text itself—is note worthy, but this is scarcely a sign of age. It would be an advantage if some analogy could be found for the line, but it is difficult to find one. Assyrian uses two short strokes, arranged vertically (like Sillôk) to indicate that two words or sentences are not connected, and a vertical line is also used to mark an important person or thing, sometimes even it is employed as a comma; various curious lines of obscure application are frequently found upon the Sinaitic inscriptions, but none of these throw any light upon the Pāsēk. Students of classical palaeography, however, might be able to provide a clue.

S. A. COOK.

H. P. SMITH'S "OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY."

THE volumes of the *International Theological Library* (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1903) are always welcome, and its Old Testament History is the one likely to appeal to the widest circle of readers. The critical study of Old Testament literature is one of unusual difficulty, and the majority of Biblical students are satisfied to content themselves with an exposition of the results. How Biblical history reads in the light of criticism is the task that was entrusted to Professor H. P. Smith, and those who knew this American scholar's commentary on the Books of Samuel in the *International Critical Commentary* did not doubt but that the volume would be a valuable and helpful piece of work. Prof. Smith's history is indeed worthy of the series to which it belongs: it is neither patchy nor ponderous, neither overladen nor superficial. It presupposes critical investigations, but at the same time it is perfectly independent. "Every new advance in criticism involves a re-writing of history" (p. vii), he states, and readers will find that the author's critical conclusions are often more advanced than, let us say, Prof. Driver's *Introduction* in the same series.

After a preliminary statement of historical principles and the growth of Old Testament study, Prof. Smith deals briefly with the literary sources. The history of tradition is the prelude to an inquiry of the facts which lie behind tradition, and in Chapters II and III he discusses the traditions in Genesis—the Hebrews' theory of their origin and earliest history—and finds in them "historical relations

rather than historical incidents." In the chapter on "Egypt and the Desert," P's unhistorical scheme is rejected, and the scantiness and untrustworthiness of J and E is noticed (p. 55). It is found that although the older traditions were not fixed they agree in dating a great religious epoch from the Exodus. The story of the Conquest is read anew in the light of the Amarna Letters, and the later accounts in the Book of Joshua are controlled by the more probable statements of earlier narratives in Judges. "Literary imagination compressed the long process of conquest into a short sharp conflict. The Book of Joshua was the result." It is an ingenious and possibly a correct suggestion that Joshua's great battles reflect later events. The fight at Merom strikingly resembles the victory of Deborah and Barak in Judges v, and Joshua's fight in the South (Joshua x) may be a duplication of an event in the time of Saul (1 Sam. xiv)¹. In the stories of the Judges or "heroes," Prof. Smith shows that we may find the second stage of the Conquest. There is no uninterrupted history, and even among the immigrants there was little cohesion. Passing over for the present the history of the Books of Samuel, we come to Solomon, whose period is illustrated by the Book of the Covenant, which, though published later, belongs to that period, if not earlier. If Solomon, like the Babylonian king Hammurabi, regarded himself as a divinely appointed judge he made no code and published no laws, and the author remarks in this connexion how little Babylonian influence was found in Palestine (p. 173).

The complicated history of the Exile and the Return requires careful treatment, and in the chapters which cover the ground from Ezekiel to the codification of the Pentateuch, attributed to Ezra, will be found some of the best pages in the book. Jewish history from the Greek period to the time of Herod the Great is treated with comparative scantiness, except in so far as contemporary Hebrew literature comes under discussion. The period more naturally falls to be considered in the volume dealing with the contemporary history of the Old Testament.

There is this difference between a history of the literature of the Old Testament and a history based upon its criticism, that the discussion of the sources which one looks for in the former is out of place in the latter. There is, accordingly, less opportunity for the historian to discuss at length rival views of the development of

¹ The view (p. 82), which had also occurred to the present writer, finds support in one or two details which Prof. Smith does not mention. Apart from the fact that the scene is almost the same, it is noteworthy that nature intervenes in both, in one an earthquake, in the other a storm of stones from heaven.

history, and he must hold that standpoint which is in accordance with his critical views. So, in the present instance, the Book of Job is considered in the chapter dealing with the rebuilding of the temple (c. 400); the Song of Songs appears in the Greek period; the fourth century is illustrated by Ruth, Joel, and Isaiah xxiv-xxvii, and to the reign of Simon Maccabaeus is ascribed the final redaction of the Psalms. For the House of Jehu, the chief literary landmarks are the Blessing of Moses, the Yahwist narratives, the Decalogue and Amos; later, in the age of Jeroboam II, Israelite history is illustrated by the writings of the Elohist and Hosea.

There is one period in Biblical history, in particular, in which there is room for fresh critical research, it is the period which Prof. Smith himself previously covered in his commentary on the Books of Samuel. For personal reasons, the present writer notes with satisfaction that Prof. Smith appreciates historical difficulties which have usually failed to receive sufficient attention, and the recognition of the obscurities in 2 Sam. ii-iv (p. 134), the adoption of the more probable view that Geshur, the home of Absalom's mother, was a Philistine, and not an Aramaean locality (p. 148), as also the conviction that Sheba's revolt was no postlude to Absalom's usurpation (p. 149, n. 2), may be taken as indications that this scholar is feeling his way to further advances. It is especially in the period extending over the Books of Samuel that one perceives a lack of firmness, a certain vagueness and want of precision, which suggest that he is not convinced that the last word has been said. In dealing with the problems, historical criticism must be supported by the evidence of the sources, and since Prof. Smith has advanced in several respects beyond his standpoint in 1899, one misses the detailed evidence upon which his more radical reconstructions are based. When, for example, the Samuel of the earlier chapters of the first Book which bears his name is rejected, it is clear that this step entails much more than Prof. Smith perceives. This view had been reached by the present writer some years previously, and if well founded leads to interesting developments. Assuming with Prof. Smith that 1 Sam. xi offers the only historical account of Saul's kingship—and in a footnote he suggests a bond of union between Jabesh-Gilead and Saul's tribe—it is necessary to consider by what narrative this chapter was originally preceded. To put it briefly, the only passage that suits the requirements is Judges x. 6-xii. 6. Nahash's threat reads like vengeance taken by the Ammonites after Jephthah's death, and the preliminary introduction to the oppression of Israel by the Ammonites and Philistines, however appropriate to the stories of Samson, appears to have some bearing upon the present accounts

of Saul's kingship. What Philistine oppression is alluded to in 1 Sam. ix. 16? Certainly *not* vii, and scarcely iv-vi. Only in Judges x. 16 can we find a satisfactory clue, and in his notes on this verse Prof. Moore writes "in its original connexion, ver. 16 must have been immediately followed by the raising up of the deliverer" (*SBOT* Eng. ed.)¹. Let us also observe that even as the enmity between Ammon and Jabesh-Gilead accounts for the friendliness between Ammon and David at a later day, so it is tempting to associate Zeredah, the home of Jeroboam, Solomon's rival, with Zeror (צֶרֶר read צֶרֶר?) in the genealogy of Saul (1 Sam. ix. 1). That 1 Sam. iv-vi remains in its original position is rendered difficult, *inter alia*, by its highly composite nature². The only chapters of similar structure which precede are in the so-called "Appendix of the Judges," and the relation between the older elements of Judges xvii-xxi and 1 Sam. i-vi requires further study. Apart from the prominence of Shiloh in both, the institution of the Mosaic ritual at Dan reminds one of Eli's origin expressed in 1 Sam. ii. 27. Finally, if the original theory be carried out to its conclusion, it will be necessary to reconsider the position of Benjamin, the youngest of the tribes of Israel. From Joshua ix. 17, &c. we have important evidence of the character of the population of certain Benjaminite localities, and the general result is to render it difficult to see what degree of security Benjamin could have enjoyed as a tribe. If, as seems not improbable, the tribe had no existence before the time of Saul at least, and if later tradition, on the other hand, placed it on an equality with the other tribes from the first (cp. D and P in Joshua), the only way to effect a reconciliation would be the theory that the tribe after attaining independent existence was almost wiped out and subsequently reorganized. If this be so, it is difficult to resist the opinion that this theory actually stands before us in Judges xix-xxi. Naturally all this must be admitted to be purely conjectural, but it is at least clear that any reconstruction of the history of Israel such as Prof. Smith proposes must be worked out to the end.

S. A. COOK.

¹ The greatest difficulty which the present writer encountered was the figure of Samuel in 1 Sam. i-x, Prof. Smith approaches the question from a different standpoint, and confesses that "we are obliged to resign the Samuel of these earlier chapters" (p. 111).

² It appears to belong to the same composite narrative as Num. x. 29-36, where in addition to the ark we have the allusion to the family of Moses.